

## **The Violent Hero and the Heroism of Violence: Narratological Investigation of Aggressive Lyrical Content of Contemporary Punjabi Pop Songs**

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### **Abstract**

Since the last decade, the violent lyrical content of Punjabi pop songs has immensely gained the attention of the stakeholders, living in the country or abroad. Albeit the issue has been enormously discussed and debated on social platforms and the civil societies and the government bodies, time and again, have also raised their concerns against such lyrics to curb them, but there seems to be an absence of substantial academic work providing a comprehensive analysis on the issue. Moreover, the present study has conducted a lyrical content analysis of the most viewed Punjabi pop songs on YouTube between 2011 to 2020, which claims that almost 61% songs are jam-packed with the lyrical content on violence and aggression. The titles, lyrics, beat, narratives, and video visuals are taken into cognizance to ascertain the elements of violence in the lyrics of contemporary Punjabi pop songs. The researcher has applied the narratological investigation method to analyse the presence, meanings, and relationships of narrative's structure and components to understand the relation between the aggressive lyrical content and the narratives of the violent hero and the heroism of violence that is glamorizing the hero for his ideals of violence, aggression and criminal adventurism. Furthermore, the study adopts a qualitative and interpretive analysis approach to examine the aggressive lyrical content of Punjabi pop songs. The analysis focuses on the interpretation of the lyrical content of the songs in combination with narratological investigation to examine their structure and function, to identify categorization, and to quantify the content.

**Keywords:** Narratology, Heroism, Violence, Aggressive Lyrical Content Analysis, Punjabi Pop Songs, Content Analysis, Criminal Adventurism

### **Introduction**

*Soora so Pehchaniye jo lade deen ke heth, purja purja kat mare kabu  
na shade khet*

He alone is known as a hero, who fights in defence of righteousness.  
He would rather be sliced apart, piece by piece, than ever retreat from  
the battlefield. (Guru Granth Sahib 1105)

The very popular idea of heroism, in general, affiliates heroism with 'gallantry,' courage, fortitude, valour, and 'bravery.' Hence, heroism "emphasis primarily its physical risk without adequately addressing other components of heroic acts, such as nobility of purpose and nonviolent acts of personal sacrifice." (Zimbardo 460) But, the concept of 'Sant-Sipahi'

(Saint-warrior) of Sikhism, deliberates heroism as a peculiar combination of valour and wisdom. Sikhism demands, the heroes to qualify the codes of the 'Saint-warrior'. Literature and cinema, across the disciplines, have been the major contributors in constructing a general imagination of heroes and heroism. Moreover, in a multifaceted world of variable cultures and narratives, defining a systematic and comprehensive definition is a tedious task. Literature, art, cinema, and myth have been exploring the nuances of heroes and heroism to draw a substantial definition. The complexity of the nature of the concept has allured scholars across disciplines to investigate the concept properly. Philip Zimbardo rightly remarks, "Heroism focuses us on what is right with human nature. We care about heroic stories because they serve as purposeful reminders that people are capable of resisting evil, of not giving into temptations, of rising above mediocrity, and of heeding the call to action and to service when others fail to act" (Zimbardo 461). The narratological investigation of the lyrical content of Punjabi pop songs such as *Hathiyaar* by Gippy Grewal, *Notorious Jatt* by Prabh Gill, *Shoot Da Order* by Jagpal Sandhu, *Gangland*, Mankeerat Aulakh, *German Gun* by Amrit Maan, *8 Rufflan* by Mankeerat Aulakh, *GOAT* by Siddhu Moosewala, *Pistal* by Bani Sandhu, *Bandook* by Karan Aujala, etc., reveals a counter-hero image to that of the Saint-warrior code. The ideals of hero represented in these songs are self-adulative and never bother about 'right with human nature'. Rather than resisting evil, these heroes are noted for promoting the liberation of evil. Furthermore, the hero of the greater Punjabi imagination is one who knows how to resist unwanted influence, who has efficiently dealt with temptations, and prefers social cause at most, but the hero of Punjabi pop songs seems to be a victim of the consumption adulation who is shown flaunting the high-end brands and luxury cars. The analysis of the songs also reveals that the majority of the content of the songs is mediocre or below. These songs do not hesitate to promote a sluggish lifestyle, a drug-induced hero who glorifies violence and aggression, and proudly portrays himself as an addict. Violence is not monotype. There are many shades of violence. Violence, like other music forms, has been a significant discursive force of Punjabi music. The aggression and violent archetypes of the Punjabi folk hero have been significantly celebrated in culture. Hence, both the folk and the pop heroes function as violent agents of the narrative, but their discursive practices make the difference. Broadly, there are two types of forces of violence visible in Punjabi music: violence as a force of oppression or violence as a reaction against the oppressor. In the narratives of Punjabi folklore of Jagga Jatt, Sucha Jatt, Jatt Jeena Maur, Dulla Bhatti, and Maula Jatt, the aggressive lyrical content of these songs represents the violence as a reaction of the oppressed against the oppressor. Nevertheless, the aggressive lyrical content of most of the contemporary pop songs is limited to personal rivalry, high caste chauvinism, Jattism, and display of high-end brands and sophisticated weaponry as symbols of masculinity, using these identities and possessions to assert social status and distinguish themselves from others. The matrix of the metaphors used in songs exhibits the characteristics of the hero restricted to being a consumer. Unlike the ideals of the folk hero, the patterns of violence and aggression, this hero exposes himself as a violent agent of personal, volatile expressions only.

Punjab had heroes in all walks of life, but the most celebrated are the military/martial heroes who prove their mettle on the battlefield and other duty-bound physical risks. Moreover, the narratives of religious tales have been one of the determining factors in the conceptualization of the ideals of heroism. Religious and spiritual leaders, Gurus, saints, and warriors are a part of the legendary tales of the state. Likewise, the concept of heroism or the specific features of a Punjabi hero, particularly the hero evolved during the Mughal empire, has a great imprint of Sikhism. Guru Har Gobind Singh, the sixth Guru, formed his followers as an amalgamation of *Sant Sipahi*, Scholar-warrior. The tenth and the last guru, Guru Gobind Singh's role in the creation and awakening of Sikhs as warriors is a significant

contribution in making and re-strengthening the hero-warriors. The Guru's teachings inspire every Sikh to achieve a harmonious blend of courage and wisdom. Since then, religion functions as one of the determinants in the narration of the heroic imagery and collective imagination of the community. Celebrating the narratives of heroes and engaging in hero worship has its own advantages, as it glorifies heroes' actions while inspiring others to emulate their noble deeds and follow in their footsteps. Such hero-worshipping or admiring and imitating the great deeds of community heroes will make them experience the emotions that a man as human is capable of. Punjab, a music enthusiast state, has been deeply passionate about music. Music is interwoven into every facet of life in Punjab, spanning from joyful events like childbirth, weddings, festivals, and social gatherings to religious ceremonies, processions, and it has also served as a potential factor in the accomplishment of significant political and agrarian movements. This strong connection to music undoubtedly influences the listeners, potentially leading to both positive and negative impacts. The narrative and the heroic imageries expressed through the lyrical content of songs may have a great impact on the psyche of listeners, especially the youth. As psychologists believe, "Experiences accompanied by strong emotions are deeply imprinted into our brain thus in experiencing a sense of the exalted while contemplating the lives of the heroes we admire, we fast-track our own heroic education in the process we add to our arsenal, a great antidote for suffering." (Moore and Gillette 45) For any moment in life when someone feels down due to the regressive forces, one may have a choice to pick a particular hero to boost her/him up. The hero picked for the inspiration can teach him/her how to respond to an intimidating obstacle in one's life? The life of the hero as an example can motivate the person to respond with the dauntlessness and devotion to human life that a hero does.

The paper endeavours to explore the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of various perspectives, both supportive and opposing, on the subject matter. It analyzes the stance and actions taken by the state and civil societies, along with the views and opinions of intellectuals, stakeholders, and relevant studies. This comprehensive analysis contributes to building a discourse around the study. The lyrical content of selected songs is examined to analyse the following research objectives: To quantify the Aggressive Lyrical Content of Contemporary Punjabi Pop Songs (2011-2021), this determines the hero as a violent, machismo man and violence as a heroic deed. And to make a narratological investigation of the Aggressive Lyrical Content to analyse the presence, meanings, and relationships of the narrative's structure and components to understand the relation between the aggressive lyrical content and the construction of the hero image. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the presence, meanings and relationships of the catch words, themes, or concepts in the contemporary Punjabi pop songs to quantify the narratives of the aggressive lyrical content and additional hypotheses of this research are to examine that a significant proportion of the most viewed Punjabi pop Songs released between 2011-2022 are jam-packed with the aggressive lyrical content that glamorize the gun and glory culture with provocation for violence and aggression. This study adopts a qualitative content analysis approach to examine the aggressive lyrical content of Punjabi pop songs. The analysis focuses on the interpretation of the lyrical content of the songs along with the narratological investigation to examine their structure and function to identify categorization and quantify the content.

### **Music and Violence: The Punjab Case**

In the era of the digital age, 'Media epistemi' forms an important role in shaping knowledge creation and its distribution. Punjab has a rich folklore tradition, and listening to music has been one of the core choices of the people. The state, in comparison to the other states of the

country, has a bigger affiliation with non-film music. Nevertheless, not only the spirit of the rich music culture of the state is overleaped by the contemporary pop music, moreover, the cult of the heroism as represented in the lyrical content of songs, have seriously affected the state of mind of the youth, who once was proudly privileged as warrior and epitome of collective self-esteem and honour. The critics have mixed opinions on violence in music. There are some who see contemporary pop songs as a boastful promotion of violence and aggression, while others see them as a potential source of aggression catharsis. Pop songs as a significant tool of popular culture “lends itself to the articulation of all types of violence, verbal and visually- in fact, it provides a window for “seeing” diverse forms of violence in society.” (Christopher 140)

Pop heroes often fuel hedonistic desires, encourage aggression for a chauvinistic identity, and unhesitantly promote alcoholism, substance use, and violence. The hero of Punjabi pop music seems prevalent during the ‘YOYO era’ (Pop singer Honey Singh’s most active years, 2003 to 2018). During this time, the *lachchar geet* (Punjabi pop songs which glorify violence, substance use, exorbitant lifestyle, and women’s objectification) get an unimpeded commercial hype, and many new singers get a breakthrough in the industry through *lachchar* songs. The heroes of pop songs predominantly fascinate and intrigue the youth. Jatt chauvinism has become a prominent archetype of the contemporary Punjabi pop songs; Jatts are represented as landlords, the owners of acres of land who are depicted and glorified for their exorbitant lifestyle. On the other hand, Jatts are represented as *vailly* (One who is an outlaw, and notorious for violence and rivalry), and the ideals of Jatt chauvinism are romanticized as a trait of heroism. But, contrary to the narratives of the pop songs, the Jatt does not stand for any caste or creed but is a member of a peasant community residing in the Punjab and other areas of northern India. Jatts, once peasants, these days perform as prominent office bearers as doctors, technocrats, lawyers, educationists, artists, etc., but the Punjabi pop songs have always glamorised the other side of the martial community. In the veneration of Jatt chauvinism, the pop songs have puffed up the traits such as violence, landlordism, egoism, weapon fascination, subordinating the other sex, acquiring illegal land, etc, as heroic deeds.

The narratives of heroism as glorified in the contemporary songs undoubtedly defame the industrious and patriotic attitude of the community. Whereas Jatt’s representation as careless, bully, short-tempered, impulsive, extravagant, *shounki*, *vailly*, etc, enthrals the minds of the Punjabi youth, and under the impression of such narratives, the listener is easily misled and influenced by the narratives. Every week, dozens of Punjabi songs are released that uphold violence/ guns as a badge of honour. It’s not just the beat of the Punjabi music, but along with it, what has been disseminated far and wide is the deafening sound of its *dunalis* (double-barrel guns). Suggestively, there is a trend being observed in Punjabi pop songs that does not hesitate to glamorise violence and aggression as ideals of Punjabis, as their historical consciousness. Corresponding to the wave of gangsta, hip-hop, and rap genres, every day, dozens of songs are released having impertinent lyrical content that promotes and glorifies violence and aggression. Singers such as, Honey Singh, Elly Mangat, Siddhu Moosewala, Karan Aujla, Mankirat Aulakh, Gippy Grewal, Deep Jandu, Badshah, Amrit Mann, R Nait, Singga, Jass Manak, Dilpreet Dhillon etc. received huge fan following which ultimately leads to a new trend in Punjabi pop music which openly encourage misogyny, alcoholism, the all –too- predominant violence. Violence can be “a subject of artistic endeavours but not an object, which is exactly what popular Punjabi culture has begun to represent”. (Singh, 2020)

This cultural devaluation is not an overnight process. “A new breed of untrained singers and composers eyeing instant success are belting out culturally-lethal cocktails of jarring beats, lewd or senseless lyrics, imageries of uncivilized bravado and stinking wealth for the local market”. (Singh, 2016) The new generation of singers is lapping up the glorification of sex, violence, drugs, and so forth. Here, the proposition is: how does violent pop music largely influence the lives of the greater majority of youth? For many youths dealing with pain and loneliness, the relationship with music and substance abuse not only coexists but, beyond a point in time, begins to overlap. These youth are especially “drawn towards artists who have drug references in their songs, albums and cover art” (Singh, 2016). After developing a liking for the rabid pop stars, the ‘lured’ /ensnared youth may start developing some sort of bizarre kinship with these pop icons who openly embrace hedonism, excess, and self-destruction. After a while, the two areas of obsession, that is, rebel music and drug consumption, begin to fuel one another. When put together, these factors are seen feeding into each other. Harmeet Singh rightly asserts, “Punjab’s crime record coupled with contemporary pop revolving around the same themes, are drawing power from each other. Plato defined Music as a ‘moral law’. It gives soul to the Universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything.” (Singh, 2016).

### **The State and the Civil Societies**

Time and again, the legislative, the executive, the judiciary, and the civil societies have voiced their concerns regarding the escalating lyrical content on violence and aggression depicted in Punjabi pop songs. Gurbhajan Singh Gill, a Punjabi poet and chairman of International Punjabi Lok Virasat Akademi, in an interview with *Hindustan Times*, emphatically asserts, “songs with bad content have great influence on society, especially on youngsters”. (Vasudeva 2020). In cognizance to the views of Mr. Gill, in an interview to *Hindustan Times*, a social activist and Punjab and Haryana high court lawyer HC Arora, rightly asserts that “When you start glorifying violence, young generation starts taking it as a fact and a fashion statement. It will have very bad impact on our society,” (Dhaliwal). Harmanjeet Singh, a poet and lyricist, and winner of the *Yuva Puruskar*, also put his concern on contemporary Punjabi pop music. In an interview, he proclaims his complete disagreement with the opinion of Punjabi pop singers who claim that the flaunting of violence and glamorizing drugs in songs does not have any impact on listeners. In another interview on RMB Television, Harmanjeet vociferously asserted that the contemporary Punjabi pop songs are openly promoting drugs and violence, which has a detrimental impact on the youth of the state.

Jaswant Singh Jafar, a famous poet, intellectual, and a renowned critic on contemporary issues of Punjab and Punjabin, time and again, has stridently criticised the content of the contemporary Punjabi pop songs. Whether it is his talk on *Harman Radio* or an interview with Upendra Randhawa on *NewsNumber*, he volubly proclaimed that the youth are not addicted to drugs, but they are the victims of it, and contemporary Punjabi pop songs have a direct impact in inciting the youth to violence and drugs. Lakha Sidhana, a gangster turned activist, in an interview with *News18*, accepted that Punjabi pop songs, which glorify drugs and violence and glamorize the gangster culture, have a detrimental impact on youth. Harbhajan Singh, a cricketer, in his famous song *Ik Suneha* (A Message), slams the trend of flamboyant (*lachchar*) songs and appeals to singers to highlight Punjab's glorious heritage rather than provoking the youth to drug consumption and violence. The quest of Harbhajan Singh, more or less, represents the voice of many Punjabis. The song also questions the representation of *Jatt*, an otherwise hardworking peasant, in a very poor light. *Jatt* is

represented as a man who always has a weapon in his hands. He also criticised the songs that glorify the consumption of drugs as part and parcel of Punjabi culture.

On June 2, 2021, Punjabi singer Jasbir Jassi also showed his concern on the emerging trend of glamourising drugs and violence in Punjabi Pop Songs and urged the Central and State governments to ban such songs. He tweeted, “Mr. @narendramodi Sir & Mr. @capt\_amrinder Sir, It's the Govt. job to save the culture to save the nation. Songs showing drugs, violence, and weapons will destroy society. Stop them or tell me also which weapon and drugs I should use in my next song?” Capt. Amarinder Singh, ex-chief minister of Punjab, time and again, had shown his interest in curbing the movies and songs promoting drugs and violence in the state. During the ongoing budget session in *Vidhan Sabha*, he emphatically proclaimed that “the state will not allow release of any movie promoting gangsters and violence which may disturb the hard-earned peace of Punjab” (Goyal 2020). The growing menace has now prompted the Punjab government to take action under sections 290 and 294 of the Indian Penal Code and sections 67 and 67A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, to check the spread of obscenity and glorification of drugs, violence, and substance abuse among the youth. Captain Amrinder Singh led government of Punjab, has taken a firm stance against songs promoting violence and drug culture, as evidenced by specific actions. For instance, Punjabi singers like late Shubhdeep Singh (known as Sidhu Moose Wala) and Mankirt Aulakh were arrested by Mansa police for songs that openly endorse violence and gun culture. This reflects the administration's position on such flamboyant singing styles. Additionally, the movie "Shooter," based on the life of the notorious gangster Sukha Kahlwan, was banned upon release, and the filmmakers faced legal consequences. Similarly, Ludhiana police booked pop singer Elly Mangat for celebratory firing, linking him to the alleged glorification of violence and gun culture in his songs.

In 2017, the Punjab government constituted a council, namely, *Punjab Kala Parishad* (Punjab Arts Council), under the aegis of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Mr. Navjot Singh Sidhu was the first Cultural Affairs Minister of the state. Dr Surjit Patar, a renowned litterateur and educationist, was nominated the first chairman of the Punjab Arts Council. One of the important objectives of the council was to curb the Punjabi pop songs promoting drugs, violence, and obscenity. In alignment with the government and other civil societies, the judiciary has also solidified its stance and issued stricter orders to regulate and reduce the depiction of violence and drugs in songs. In response to a petition filed dated 22.7.2019, CWP No. 6213 of 2016 (O&M), the Punjab and Haryana High Court takes notice and orders that the glorification of violence has given rise to a culture of gangsters in the States of Punjab, Haryana, and the Union Territory, Chandigarh. The Court can also take judicial notice of the fact that the glorification of liquor, wine, drugs, and violence in the songs of the states of Punjab, Haryana, and the Union Territory, Chandigarh has increased in recent times. These songs affect the children of an impressionable age (CWP 6213 of 2016" 5). The Director General of Police in the States of Punjab, Haryana, and the Union Territory, Chandigarh are directed to ensure that no songs are played glorifying liquor, wine, drugs, and violence in any song, even in live shows (CWP 6213 of 2016" 5).

### **The Counter Opinion: The Aggression Catharsis Hypothesis**

The entertainment industry takes a contrasting view, arguing that songs and movies simply mirror the prevailing violence in society. They see media as a mirror that portrays the violence already present in society, suggesting that the violence depicted in songs is a reflection of societal realities. They refer to Aristotle's concept of catharsis to validate their

claim. Moreover, they also claim that the representation of violence in media has a curative effect on the audience. The songs about violence rather help the youth achieve catharsis for their aggression. As claimed by Grace Johnson, “violence in media often serves as a release valve for aggressive impulses which would otherwise be bolted up, only to explode later” (Grace 8). Time and again, such claims of the entertainment industry have been shunned by studies. Nevertheless, the claim of the singers and lyricists of Punjab that violence in songs has no negative influence on the aggressive behaviour of the listener seems a publicity stunt; a white lie. Interestingly, although the singers, producers, and lyricists disagree on the impact of media violence on the aggressive behaviour of youth, but no one comes forward to deny the influence of such advertisements on the psyche of the audience; they are rather earning much through advertisements. Thus, just as commercial ads can sway consumers to purchase a product, songs with lyrical content on violence and aggression have the potential to incite listeners towards similar behaviours. Christenson and Roberts emphasize that in the adolescent years, pop music is the ‘heavy equipment’ more influential than television, movies, and computers.

Music matters to adolescents, and they cannot be understood without a serious consideration of how it fits into their lives. Music alters and intensifies their moods, furnishes much of their slang, dominates their conversations, and provides the ambiance at their social gatherings. Music styles define the crowds and cliques they run in, and music personalities provide models for how they act and dress. The youth primarily use music to control mood and enhance emotional states (25).

Though the aggression catharsis hypothesis has been thoroughly explored and debunked in several entertainment media domains, there has been relatively little work on the effects of songs with violent lyrics on aggression-related variables such as aggressive thoughts and feelings. There are valid reasons to worry about the potentially harmful effects of violent music lyrics. Numerous studies have shown that aggressive words can prime aggressive thoughts, perceptions, and behavior (See Benjamin, & Bartholow; Chen, & Barrows; Bargh & Pietromonaco). Indeed, such effects can occur even when the stimulus has not been consciously recognized. Thus, in light with the above-mentioned facts it is observed that the social thinkers, intellectuals, politicians, singers, lyricists and academicians never hesitate to vocalize their concerns regarding the lyrical content of the Punjabi pop songs and staunchly believe that these pop songs are one of the significant factors in provoking the youth for violence. Moreover, at the same time, some singers, producers, and lyricists claim that the songs are only for entertainment, and these issues have been overreacted to in the media. Hence, while some pop artists believe that exposure to aggressive content can indeed provide a cathartic outlet and reduce aggressive tendencies; both the state and civil societies argue that it may reinforce or normalize aggressive behaviour instead. In the realm of pop songs, where themes of aggression, rebellion, and violence are common, understanding the impact of these lyrics and music on listeners' behaviour becomes crucial. Hence, the state and the civil societies have raised their concern on the content of contemporary Punjabi pop songs and they ardently assert that the glorification of violence in contemporary Punjabi pop songs has increased in recent times, yet no any structured or systematic research is done so far to record the lyrical content of Punjabi pop songs. The present paper provides a systematic structural analysis of the lyrical content of Punjabi pop songs.



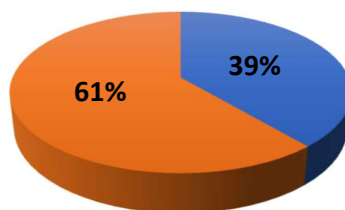
## **Narratological Investigation: Variable-wise Lyrical Content Analysis**

Narratological investigation method has been used here to find and analyse a narrative voice, which further leads to the recognition of the kinds of 'voice markers' for the analysis of the selected songs. The voice markers such as content matter, subject expressions, and pragmatic signals are codified and decoded for the analysis. Narratology, as a method, has been applied and used in literary analysis, but its presence and significance can be realized in music as well. Today, the media narrative has become a significant determinant in understanding and conveying meaning. The narratologist Byron Almén, in his book *A Theory of Musical Narrative* (2008), has profoundly proclaimed that narrativity is not limited only to storytelling. He emphasised that "the existence of narrative does not require a meta-linguistic discourse that presupposes causality, narrator and referentiality" (Pawłowska 10). He emphatically argues that the narrativity in music is also possible, since music "is not a secondary phenomenon taken from literature and that it can manifest itself through the interaction of musical elements"(Pawłowska 17). Indicating the lexical complexity of the term, he asserts, "Because narrative was first conceptualized in relation to literature, we have largely failed to recognize the distinction between narrative proper, and narrative as manifested in literature" (Almén 12).

Narratology in music studies explores how musical works, even those without explicit narratives, can be analyzed through the lens of narrative theory, examining elements like plot, character, and theme, and how music can evoke stories and emotions. Narratology is "a multi-disciplinary study of narrative which negotiates and incorporates the insights of many other critical discourses that involve narrative forms of representation" (Onega and Landa 14). A narrative is "the semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and causal way" (Onega 16). Anything which may fall under the larger canvas of semiotic media may be written or spoken, visual images, gestures, and acting, as well as a combination of these, narratology treats as a text. "Any semiotic construct, anything made of signs, can be said to be a text" (Onega 16) and the text involves a point of view, a selection, a perspective on the represented object, criteria of relevance, and, narratological investigation focuses on understanding how the text is structured and how it conveys meaning. In the present paper narratological investigation method is applied in the analysis of Punjabi pop songs (Most Viewed Songs on YouTube from 2011 to 2021) to understand the narrative content and tones of the songs, and the cultural, psychological, and social implications of their portrayal. Furthermore, the narrative techniques such as the narrative structure, characters and archetypes, point of view, agency, and violence as a narrative tool are used to identify and understand the issues of the study. In this section, the methods of content analysis are applied to quantify and analyze the presence, meaning, and relationship of the catch words, themes, or concepts indicating the presence of aggressive lyrical content. Furthermore, the most viewed songs on YouTube from 2011 to 2021 are picked as a sample for content analysis. The lyrical content of the songs is analysed in terms of the major variables chosen for the study. Henceforth, 'category codes' are coded and narrowed down into the subsequent 'category codes' as songs inciting violence/aggression. The content that does not fall under the selected variable is considered the second variable, namely Any Other Songs. Hence, the narratological markers, such as content matter, themes/catch words related to the variables, are marked as codes, which are further analysed to identify patterns in the listed songs. The words and the visual representation are examined in the observation of the songs. This section makes a content analysis of the songs in combination with the narratological structure and function of the songs to identify categorization and quantify the content. The analysis of the results for the Lyrical Content of the most viewed songs is as follows-



## Lyrical Content Analysis of Most Viewed Punjabi Pop Songs (2011-2021)



■ Songs with lyrical content on Violence/Aggression ■ Songs with Other Lyrical Content

**Pie Chart 1:** Content Analysis of YouTube's Most Viewed Punjabi Pop Songs

Pie Chart 1 illustrates the share percentage of the contents mentioned as-

- i) Songs with Lyrical Content on Violence/Aggression
- ii) Songs with other Lyrical content.

Out of the entire sample (157 songs), the lyrical content of 39% of songs (62 songs out of 158 songs) corresponds with the content of violence and aggression, which also glorify guns and a glory culture. The following is the list of the most viewed songs on YouTube from 2011 to 2021, which are found jam-packed with content of violence and aggression.

Sl No.	Song	Year	Singer	Sl No.	Song	Year	Singer
1	Daang	2011	Gippy Grewal	31	Jatt Da Mukabla	2019	Siddhu Moosewala
2	Hathiyaar	2011	Gippy Grewal	32	Wakhra Swag	2019	Nav Inder
3	Notorious Jatt	2011	Prabh Gill	33	Jatt Fate Chak	2019	Amrit Maan
4	Yaar Bathere	2012	Alfaaz	34	Don't Worry	2019	Karan Aujala
5	Kabootri	2012	Sippy Gill	35	Subah Jatt Da	2020	Amrit Maan
6	This Party Getting Ho	2012	Jazzy B/ Yo Yo	36	Distance Age	2020	R Nait
7	Desi Kalakar	2014	Honey Singh	37	Barood Wargi	2020	Simran K Dhandli
8	Chitta	2014	Jaggi Sidhu	38	Tibya Da Putt	2020	Siddhu Moosewala
9	Dhokha	2014	Jimmy Kotkapura	39	Chithiyan	2020	Karan Aujala
10	Laden	2014	Jassi Gill	40	8 Parche	2020	Bani Sandhu

11	40 Kille	2015	Hardeep Grewal	41	Red E4	2020	Karan Aujala
12	Black Dog	2015	GV	42	Chadigarh	2020	Dilpredet Dhilllo
13	Jugadi Jatt	2015	Mankeerat Aujala	43	Clash	2020	Diljit Dosanjh
14	Kala Sher	2015	Anmol Gagan	44	SHO	2020	Singha
15	Affair	2016	Elly Mangat	45	Adhiya	2020	Karan Aujala
16	Shoot Da Order	2016	Jagpal Sandhu	46	Old School	2020	Prem Dhillon
17	Gangland	2017	Mankeerat Aulakh	47	Chu Gon Do	2021	Karan Aujala
18	Vakhra Swag	2017	Nav Inder	48	Maxico Koka	2021	Karan Aujala
19	Veervaar	2017	Diljeet Dosanj	49	12 Diya 12	2021	Sippy Gill
20	Daaku	2017	Elly Mangat	50	Regret	2021	Siddhu Moosewala
21	Snitch	2017	Elly Mangat	51	295	2021	Siddhu Moosewala
22	So High	2017	Siddhu Moosewala	52	GOAT	2021	Siddhu Moosewala
23	Gangster Scene	2017	Gurusewak Dhillon	53	Calaboosa	2021	Siddhu Moosewala
24	President roley	2018	Imran Khan	54	G Shit	2021	Siddhu Moosewala
25	Illegal Weapon	2018	Garry Sandhu	55	Pistal	2021	Bani Sandhu
26	Dollor	2018	Siddhu Moosewala	56	8 Rafflan	2021	Mankirat Aulakh
27	Marzi Nal Faisale	2018	Himmat Sandhu	57	Ali Baba	2021	Mankirat Aulakh
28	Oh Bande	2018	Dilraj Dhilllo	58	Jat te Jawani	2021	Dilpredet Dhilllo
29	Badnam	2018	Mankeerat Aulakh	59	Bandook	2021	Karan Aujala
30	German Gun	2019	Amrit Maan	60	Top Nauch Gabru	2021	Vikky
31	Baby, Baby	2019	Mankirat Aulakh	61	Talja	2021	Jassa Dhillon

The lyrical content of the above-mentioned songs exposes the hero as *Vailly* (the rival) and the *Vailpuna* (enmity) as partaking of his nature. These songs also depict hero as a gunslinger, a man who readily carries and uses *Hathiyaar/Aslahe* (Ammunition). Likewise, he is depicted as a hostile who never minds being violent and feels proud in flaunting

weapons. 45 songs out of 62 observed having references and display of *Aslahe* (Weapon). Weapons such as a *32 Bore Pistol*, *AK 47*, *Donali/ Double Barrelled gun*. The hero is shown on the screen as a macho and cantankerous man who practices rivalry (*Sarikebaji*) and does not hesitate to use violent means to fix his rivals (*shareeks*). Moreover, in these songs, it is also observed that the criminals and gangsters are purposely acclaimed as modern Robin Hoods. For instance, in a song *shoot da order* (more than 116 million views), the protagonist, who is a gangster, is shown as a daredevil celebrating his shoot at sight order. Here, the gangster is portrayed as a brave hero.

## Conclusion.

Alas, I have known noble men who lost their highest hope. And henceforth they slandered all high hopes. Henceforth, they lived impudently in brief pleasures, and they had hardly an aim beyond the day. Once they thought of becoming heroes; but sensualists are they now. A trouble and a terror is the hero to them. But by my love and hope I conjure thee: cast not away the hero in thy (Nietzsche 71).

Music is central to youth culture. In the times we live in, it is a widely established fact that celebrities and the media exercise a profound influence on the lives of young people. Pop singers are more than just singers; they are icons who have a massive impact on young minds. In the current age, the youths idealize and look up to the pop stars and actors as their “role models” with the intent to walk, talk, dress, and act like the stars they idolize. Music and mood are closely interrelated. Listening to happy or peaceful music leads to the recollection of positive memories, whereas listening to emotionally scary, loud, and violent music invokes largely negative emotions and memories. Music-induced mood changes affect how we feel and dramatically change our perception of our everyday lives. It creates its narrative of happiness or sadness even where none exists in its wake. Despite the severe legislative measures in various garbs to curtail it, the lyrical content on violence and aggression in Punjabi pop songs remains unstoppable. The outlaw hero, community rivalry (*Sareekebaaji*), and flaunting of sleek weapons have come to constitute the masculinist rituals and symbols in the youth culture of the contemporary Punjabi pop era, which ultimately propel the youth toward violence, aggression, and an addictive lifestyle. Nevertheless, Punjabi music is not only high on wild beats, but it also more emphatically depicts and glorifies the narratives of violence and aggression. A rabid race among Punjabi Pop artists to catapult themselves to instant success has led them to readily tap into the gun and glory narratives, with the resulting emergence of violence-laced songs as the defining feature of Punjabi music. Hence, heroism has always been a noble idea under the folk tradition, but this nobility has been undermined to mere theatrical display of violence and aggression in contemporary pop songs. It is a point of grave concern. The narratives of hero and the heroism of the narratives if “embody a combination of deliberate nobility and potential sacrifice”. (Zimbardo 466) may set positive examples for the youth of the state.

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### **Bionote**

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